

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

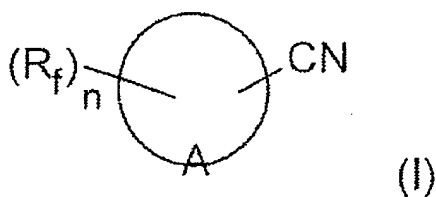
1- 31 (Canceled)

32. (New) A method for preparing an ester of an aromatic carboxylic acid bearing at least one perfluoroalkyl group on the aromatic ring, comprising the steps of:

a) reacting an aromatic compound bearing at least one perfluoroalkyl group and at least one nitrile group on the aromatic ring, an alcohol and a strong protonic acid, at a temperature of at least 45°C, and

b) recovering the ester obtained from the reaction medium of step a).

33. (New) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein the aromatic compound bearing at least one nitrile group and at least one perfluoroalkyl group corresponds to general formula:



wherein:

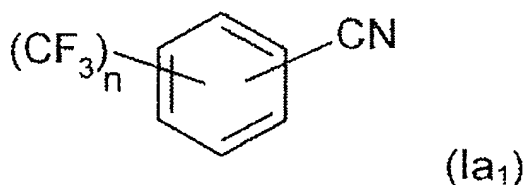
A represents the residue of a benzene or naphthalene ring,

R_f represents a perfluoroalkyl chain of formula -[CF₂]_p-CF₃ in which p

represents a number ranging from 0 to 10, and

n is a number at least equal to 1.

34. (New) The method as claimed in claim 33, wherein the aromatic compound bearing at least one nitrile group and at least one perfluoroalkyl group corresponds to general formula:



wherein:

n is a number at least equal to 1, and

at least one trifluoromethyl group is at a 3-, 4- or 5-position.

35. (New) The method as claimed in claim 34, wherein n is equal to 1 and the trifluoromethyl group is at the 3- or 4-position or n is equal to 2 and the two trifluoromethyl groups are at the 3- and 4- or 3- and 5-position.

36. (New) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein the aromatic compound bearing at least one nitrile group is further substituted, with alkyl, alkoxy, nitro group or halogen atom.

37. (New) The method as claimed in claim 36, wherein the aromatic compound bearing at least one nitrile group and at least one perfluoroalkyl group is m-trifluoromethylbenzonitrile.

38. (New) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein the alkanol corresponds to the following formula:



wherein, R_1 represents an alkyl, cycloalkyl or arylalkyl group.

39. (New) The method as claimed in claim 38, wherein the alkanol is methanol or ethanol.

40. (New) The method as claimed in claim 33, wherein the alkanol is used in a quantity such that the ratio between the number of moles of alkanol and the number of moles of aromatic compound bearing at least one nitrile group of formula (I) is between about 1 and about 20.

41. (New) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein the concentration of the aromatic compound bearing at least one nitrile group in the medium is at least 50% by weight.

42. (New) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein an organic solvent is further used in step a).

43. (New) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein a protonic acid having a pK_a in water less than that of the starting nitrile-type compound is further used in step a).

44. (New) The method as claimed in claim 43, wherein the strong protonic acid is a hydric acid, halogenated oxyacid, nonhalogenated oxyacid, halogenated sulfonic acid, nonhalogenated sulfonic acid, ethanedisulfonic acid, benzenesulfonic acid, benzenedisulfonic acid, toluenesulfonic acid, xylenesulfonic acid, naphthalenesulfonic

acid, naphthalenedisulfonic acid, or halocarboxylic acid.

45. (New) The method as claimed in claim 33, wherein the strong protonic acid is hydrochloric acid, sulfuric acid, trifluoromethanesulfonic acid or methanesulfonic acid.

46. (New) The method as claimed in claim 33, wherein the hydrochloric acid is in gaseous form.

47. (New) The method as claimed in claim 33, wherein the strong protonic acid is used in a quantity, expressed as the ratio of the number of proton equivalents to the number of moles of aromatic compound bearing at least one nitrile group, is between about 1 and about 10.

48. (New) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein the method is carried out under a controlled atmosphere of inert gases.

49. (New) The method as claimed in one of claims claim 32, wherein the aromatic compound bearing at least one nitrile group and the alkanol, and, optionally, an organic solvent, are loaded, and then the acid is added.

50. (New) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein the reaction is carried out at a temperature of between 45°C and a temperature less than the boiling point of the alkanol.

51. (New) The method as claimed in claim 50, wherein the reaction temperature is between 50°C and 60°C and the alkanol is methanol or ethanol.

52. (New) The method as claimed in claim 51, wherein the acid is added gradually, continuously or in fractions.

53. (New) The method as claimed in claim 50, wherein, in step a) water is further added, the reaction medium is allowed to separate by decantation and, then, the organic and aqueous phases are separated.
54. (New) The method as claimed in claim 53, wherein the ester obtained is extracted with the aid of an organic solvent from the organic phase.
55. (New) The method as claimed in claim 50, wherein the water formed during the reaction is removed by distillation.
56. (New) The method as claimed in claim 55, wherein the water is removed by distillation at a temperature of between 40°C and 120°C, at atmospheric pressure or under reduced pressure ranging from 10 mm of mercury to atmospheric pressure.
57. (New) The method as claimed in claim 55, wherein the alkanol and the acid are again added.
58. (New) The method as claimed in claim 57, wherein the alkanol is used in a quantity such that the ratio between the number of moles of alkanol and the number of moles of the aromatic compound bearing at least one nitrile group is between about 1 and about 3.
59. (New) The method as claimed in claim 57, wherein the acid is used in a quantity such that the ratio of the number of proton equivalents to the number of moles of the aromatic compound bearing at least one nitrile group is between about 1 and about 2.
60. (New) The method as claimed in claim 57, wherein after maintaining at a temperature chosen between 45°C and a temperature less than the boiling point of the

alkanol in step a), the ester obtained is recovered in step b).

61. (New) The method as claimed in claim 32, wherein the ester obtained is a methyl (trifluoromethyl)benzoate.

62. (New) The method as claimed in claim 61, wherein the ester obtained is methyl 3-(trifluoromethyl)benzoate.